

MQEC At a Glance

Representation

MQEC represents the approximately 150,000 K-12 public school students in Montana.

Purpose

MQEC is the “Constitutional Guardian” of Article X of the Montana state constitution, working for public school students and their communities. We advocate for, pursue, and defend the need for adequate and equitable funding to provide quality education for each of Montana’s public school students.

Activities

- Lobbying
- Consultation with: Office of Public Instruction
 Board of Public Education
 Governor’s Office
 Legislative Services
 Legislative Fiscal Division
- Collaboration with: Montana Association of School Business Officials (MASBO)
 Montana Federation of Public Employees (MFPE)
 Montana Rural Education Association (MREA)
 Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA)
 School Administrators of Montana (SAM)
- Litigation: Columbia Falls I (2002-2005)
 Columbia Falls II (2008)
 MQEC v. State of Montana (2011-2012)
 Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue (2015 – present)

Governance

- **10 K-12 Superintendents**
Independent Elementary: 1 East, 1 West (East Helena, Target Range)
Class C: 1 East, 1 West (Bainville, Sun River Valley)
Class B: 1 East, 1 West (Baker, Fairfield)
Class A: 1 East, 1 West (Sidney, Columbia Falls)
Class AA: 1 East, 1 West (Great Falls)
- **Organizational Representatives**
Indian Impact Schools of Montana (Ronan School District)
MASBO, MFPE, MREA, MTSBA, SAM

Executive Director Dianne Burke (2014 – present)

- B.A. Biochemistry; M.S. Chemistry; M. Ed. Educational Leadership
Doctoral Student in Educational Leadership – Focus Area School Finance
- Educator 1986 – present
- School Board Trustee 11 years; President of MTSBA 2012-2013

Priorities for the 2019 Legislative Session

Defend and preserve the existing funding formula defined in 20-9-309 MCA

Insist upon the return of the Data for Achievement payment as specified in SB 261 from the 2017 session

Insist upon expansion of Guaranteed Tax Base payments as specified in HB 647: 216% for FY19, 224% for FY2020, 232% for FY2021

Insist upon funding for the school facilities program through the natural resource development (NRD) payment

Ensure application of inflation to all elements in the funding formula, including special education

Successfully defeat efforts to fund charter schools, tax credits, vouchers, and education savings accounts, with public funds at the expense of funds that would otherwise be committed to our public schools

Successfully defeat assaults against the Board of Public Education's accreditation standards and local district policy

Support new funding for early childhood education